

Future evaluation – do we need new criteria?

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The threats for marginalization of evaluation

- Identifying evaluation with **control and criticism** causes **negative attitudes** (due to e.g. mentality, low evaluation culture)
- "Celebrating an evaluation ritual" – meeting **requirements** („accounting”) vs inner **needs** (improvement, development)
- **Alienation** of evaluation instead of its **socialization**, **technocratic vs participatory approach** (often misunderstood)
- **Diminishing demand** for evaluation since 2015 (in Poland, EU)
- „Evaluation machine” does not work (well) in **times of turbulence** – pandemic, environmental & social crisis

The role of evaluation criteria

- **Evaluation criteria** reflect certain values, define priorities
- Indication of **how we value specific aspects** of the evaluation subject
- Assessment of the degree of meeting **specific requirements**
- **Prism/kaleidoscope** for an evaluator – differentiated picture depending on selected evaluation criteria
- The one who decides on evaluation criteria is an **owner of evaluation** process as they **influence** research questions, collected data, conclusions and recommendations



„Traditional” criteria

- Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):
relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability ("big 5" since 1991) + **coherence** with other initiatives (since 2019)
- European Commission (MEANS Collection 1999): + **utility, complementarity, coordination, synergy, reproducibility, equity, acceptability, EU added value** (new)
- Others - satisfaction, management, partnership, compliance with the standard

New suggestions

- **Caroline Heider** - *Rethinking Evaluation* blog series 2017 (e.g. the need to revise known criteria, formulating criteria for new areas), **Zenda's Ofir** blog on evaluation
- **M. Q. Patton** – socially and environmentally conscious evaluation, **transformational evaluation** (American Journal of Evaluation, 2021) - the current criteria are not appropriate for the evaluation of transformation and systemic changes (*„The greatest danger for evaluators in times of turbulence is not the turbulence – it is to act with yesterday's criteria* (paraphrase Peter Drucker – „yesterday's logic”). WG within the International Evaluation Academy
- **prof. Thomas Schwandt** – criticism of the neoliberal approach, and "projectoses". The criteria and the values behind them are not universal; should be negotiable (*„Evaluating and Valuing in Social Research”, T. Schwandt & E. Gates 2021*).
- **Global Agenda 2030 UN, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, - e.g. human rights, justice, equity, inclusion, and gender equality

KHP as evaluation criteria?

KEY HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

Equity

Gender equality

Social justice

Partnership

Good governance

Innovation

Inclusivity

Democracy

Human rights

Sustainable development

- Who may/should **decide** on evaluation criteria?
- What are **our values** and how they can **be reflected** in evaluations?
- How much are KHP **important**? For whom?
- How to implement KHP in **evaluation concepts**?
- What **questions** based on KHP could be formulated?
- How KHP as evaluation criteria can **influence evaluation** (process, results, and its short/long-term effects)?
- What could be the **role of VOPEs** in this area?

„Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results“.

Albert Einstein



„The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new“.

Socrates

Thank you for your attention

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